



Raider Review



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U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt

Raiders control Taji... Col. James Pasquarette, left, commander, 1st BCT, and Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Wells, command sergeant major, 1st BCT unveil the brigade colors at a Transfer of Authority ceremony held on Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 18. The brigade officially assumed responsibility, at the TOA ceremony, for combat operations at Taji.

Assariya construction projects near completion

By Maj. David Olson
1st BCT PAO

There are several construction projects in the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's area of operations nearing completion that will improve the quality of life

for the Iraqi citizens of Assariya.

These projects will provide a safer and cleaner environment for the 3,000 people living in Assariya. The projects will also make the community more independent and boost the economy.

"Assariya is a model village," said Maj. Herb

Joliat, the brigade civil military operations officer. "We are able to reward them for their support to Coalition and Iraqi army forces by awarding contracts to improve their way of life."

The most important project is the construction of a new classroom building —(go to page 12, projects)

Brigade commander commends Soldiers, stresses discipline

By Col. James Pasquarette
Commander, 1st BCT

Raider Brigade Soldiers: I want to thank each and every one of you for your part in getting the brigade to the transfer of authority on Jan. 18, 2006. Your hard work, discipline and professionalism has the brigade postured for success in a very complex environment. The training opportunity we have had to date has set us up for success. We have an incredibly important mission here in Iraq – and I’m confident that we’ll succeed as a team.



I’d ask every Soldier to do a couple of things every day when you report for duty. First, make sure you’re ready to take care of your buddy. The buddy rule works – look

out for each other 24 hours a day. Second, stay focused. One of the biggest hazards here in Iraq is complacency. It leads to a drop in standards and discipline. Take a step back and look at yourself – are you starting to cut corners? Third, conduct a personal risk assessment every day. Identify the hazards in the area/ environment you are operating in and apply some controls to lessen the risk. Operating in a combat environment is inherently dangerous. Accidents are claiming too many Soldiers lives. Do your part by operating in a safe manner – and make corrections on those around you that are operating in an unsafe manner. If the person outranks you and he or she give you a hard time, refer him or her to the brigade commander or brigade command sergeant major for some guidance – Command Sgt. Maj. Wells and I will take it from there. Finally, make sure you are taking the time to keep in contact with your loved ones back home. You may not

realize it, but you are dearly missed by those that love you. A call, letter or email will make the day of someone in your life.

I’m indescribably proud of what you are doing over here. I believe in the deepest part of my soul that there is no higher calling than to be a Soldier. Keep up the great work – and I’ll see you around the area of operation.

Raiders.

Col. Jim Pasquarette
Raider 6



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Purple heart to be awarded for first 1BCT Soldier wounded in action

By Capt. Jason Honeycutt
1st Bn., 66th AR

In a ceremony on Jan. 24, the 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, awarded its first Purple Heart for Operation Iraqi Freedom 5.

The Purple Heart was presented to Staff Sgt. Sisaket Bilavarn at Fort Hood, Texas, for injuries received during combat operations.

Bilavarn, an engineer squad leader in Company E, 1st Bn., 66th AR, was commanding an M1114 up-armored Humvee en route from Camp Buehring, Kuwait, to Camp Taji, Iraq. He was part of a detail whose mission was to

escort a convoy of "Iron Knight" vehicles moving to Camp Taji on Heavy Equipment Transports (HETs).

As the convoy rehearsed battle drills and prepared to depart Kuwait, tensions were high.

"We knew there was a chance we would come into contact with Anti-Iraqi Forces [AIF] on the trip up, most likely in the form of an IED [Improvised Explosive Device]," said 1st Lt. Brandon Chapman, the convoy commander. "But we rehearsed our actions on contact and were ready to execute our mission."

The convoy mission

went according to plans for the first two days. On Jan. 4, the third day of the mission, however, they came under attack. As the convoy was approaching

Baghdad from the south, an IED exploded on the roadside next to Bilavarn's Humvee. The blast damaged the vehicle and fractured Bilavarn's right ankle.

"When we heard and saw the explosion, we executed our battle drills just like we rehearsed them," Chapman said. "Once we were able to assess the situation, we discovered Staff Sergeant Bilavarn had been wounded and began moving to BIAP

[Baghdad International Airport] for medical treatment."

No one else was injured and no other vehicles were damaged in the explosion. Bilavarn was provided primary medical treatment on site by Pfc. Aaronoscarsson Albino, a medic from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 66th AR, traveling with the convoy, and then was ground evacuated to BIAP for further treatment.

He was then flown to Landstuhl, Germany, for further treatment. From Landstuhl, Bilavarn was flown home to Fort Hood where he received his Purple Heart and is recovering from his injury.



Sniper weapons fielded to bring on heat

By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff writer

If it ain't broke, don't fix it. That's the saying Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division have been using as they engage targets with their pre-Vietnam War era weapons.

"The military has started issuing the M14 designated squad marksman rifle to help provide long-range

precision fire against insurgent threats," said Sgt. Keith Brumlow, sniper section sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company. "Insurgents get threatened when they know they have a person with a military weapon capable of engaging targets greater than the normal scope [distance a shot can be accurately taken]."

The advantage the unit has with the M14 is mainly the increased range the round travels. The 7.62 mm round goes faster, farther and has



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Soldiers from HHC, 1st Bn., 66th AR fire M14 rifles on the Udairi Range Complex.

greater knockdown power than the 5.56 mm round, which the M16,

(go to page 7, M14)

Sixty Raider Brigade Soldiers reenlist in special desert ceremony

By Maj. David Olson
1st BCT PAO

Sixty Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division reenlisted, Dec. 27, at Camp Buehring in the middle of the dusty Kuwaiti desert to continue their commitment of service to the U.S. Army and their nation.

Col. James Pasquarette, commander of 1st BCT, led the reenlistees in reciting their oath "...to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies..." in front of a brigade formation in the motor pool. The brigade, as well as the reenlistees, faced north toward Iraq as a reminder of why the 1st BCT is here.

Between each battalion



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

The 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment stand in formation at the mass reenlistment ceremony held at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 27. The brigade reenlisted 60 Soldiers at once.

mass formation, a vehicle signifying the unit sat as a backdrop to this historic event. The vehicles included a M1A2 Abrams main battle tank, a M2A3 Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, a M88A2 recovery vehicle, a M109A6 Paladin self-propelled howitzer, a

M1114 up-armored Humvee, and a Joint Node Network communications trailer.

The Soldiers reenlisted for different reasons.

One Soldier signed up to complete his 20-year career. "I didn't sign up for the money. I'll have 14

years in the Army by the time my current contract is up, so I signed up indefinite to complete my career," explained Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt, the brigade's public affairs non-commissioned officer in charge assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Special Troops Battalion.

"This is also the first time during my career that I received a bonus," Hunt added.

According to Master Sgt. James Nicolai, the brigade reenlistment sergeant from HHD, 1st STB, most Soldiers renewed their contracts for their choice of assignment. "Most Soldiers wanted to stay at Hood or to stay in the Army."

"Right now the bonuses — (go to page 11, Mass)

Brigade PAO places second in Jingle Bell Jog

A 4th Infantry Division Soldier placed and won some hardware at the annual holiday Jingle Bell Jog at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 28.

Maj. David Olson, the 1st Brigade Combat Team's public affairs officer, placed

and received a second place trophy in the 40 – 49 age bracket and 14th overall with a time of 20:42 in the 5K Jingle Bell Jog hosted by Morale, Welfare and Recreation. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes.)



Raven soars above 1st BCT skies

by Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt
Editor, Raider Review

As the Global War on Terrorism moves towards its fifth year, a new tool to root out terrorists, find improvised explosive devices and conduct reconnaissance missions comes into the picture. Enter the Raven.

The Raven is a small unmanned aerial vehicle used as a reconnaissance and surveillance tool. It transmits live airborne video images, compass headings and locations to a ground control unit and a remote video terminal.

"It took us about two-weeks to learn how to use the equipment," said Sgt. 1st Class Darren Attebery, assistant operations sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. "Teams are made up of a pilot and a mission controller. We just got the Raven before we shipped everything over here, and that's why we are out here practicing with it."

The Raven's capability enables operators to navigate, search for targets, recognize terrain and record information for analysis. Although its wingspan measures only 55 inches and is extremely lightweight, the Raven operates at an altitude of up to 1,000 feet and has a cruise speed of 30 mph, but it has been rumored to reach speeds up to 60 mph.

The Raven, which looks a lot like a child's remote control airplane, is hand launched and has the capability to switch from front to side view with the camera implanted in its nose. It



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt

Spc. Ned Dixon, counter fire acquisition specialist, HHB, 4th Bn., 42nd FA, 1st BCT tosses the Raven, a small unmanned aerial vehicle, to get it started flying at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait.

transmits real-time video, with amazing clarity, from any location within ten kilometers of the aircraft. Also, a 60-minute flyover can be achieved as a rechargeable lithium battery sparks its tiny electric motor. What's astounding is it can all be set-up and in the air in less than 15-minutes.

"They are using them [the Raven] a lot over in Iraq right now," Attebery said. "I believe if it is used effectively, it could save a lot of lives. That's why there is so much emphasis on us training with them."

Currently, the 1st BCT is building combat power, testing their equipment and mentally preparing to deploy into Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This is the brigade's second stint in the troubled country in the last three years.

During the Raider Brigade's first deployment, they were part of a coalition force tasked with defeating the Iraqi army and removing the

Saddam Hussein regime. This time around, the brigade is prepared to help the Iraqi Security Forces provide a safe and secure environment so the newly elected politicians can run their democratic government, root out terrorists pouring in from neighboring countries and defend itself.

The Raven is a tool U.S. commanders are using to support the Iraqis' efforts to provide a safe and secure environment while minimizing loss of life.

"My job is a blast," said Spc. Ned Dixon, a counter fire acquisition specialist also with HHB, who operates the Raven as an additional duty. "I would like this to be my permanent job."

"From what I'm told, I'm going to be doing this a lot," Dixon added. "We just send up a plane instead of using Soldiers to do the job. If I only find one IED during the year and it saves a life, it will be worth it."

Straight Arrows assume authority

By Capt. Douglas Wilbur
4th Bn., 42nd FA Regt.

The “Straight Arrow” Soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery assumed responsibility for their sector of the defense of Camp Taji, Iraq, from the “Gunners” of the 4th Bn., 1st FA with the 1st Armored Division at a Transfer of Authority ceremony held Jan. 13.

During the event, the “Straight Arrows” uncased their colors to symbolize the assumption of responsibility for assigned missions in support of the 1st Brigade Combat Team.

Lt. Col. Craig Newman, commander of 4th Bn., 42nd FA, and Lt. Col. Richard Bowyer, commander of 4th Bn., 1st



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Lt. Col. Craig Newman, left, commander of 4th Bn., 42nd FA, and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Williams present the colors of the battalion at their Transfer of Authority Ceremony, Jan. 13.

FA exchanged plaques commemorating the event. They thanked each other for the support and hard work required to make the TOA possible.

According to Newman, “The Gunners of 4-1 (4th Bn., 1st FA) are an extremely professional battalion and have prepared us for complete success in

our mission.”

The ceremony was completed with the presentation of Army Commendation Medals to eight “Straight Arrow” Soldiers whose hard work and dedication to duty made the deployment process and the TOA successful.

Command Sgt. Maj.

Michael Williams, command sergeant major of the 4th Bn., 42nd FA commended his troops at the ceremony. “To the Soldiers of this great battalion, I want to say thank you for your hard work and hustle”.

The “Gunners” will return to Fort Riley, Kan., for a well earned homecoming after being deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They have been deployed 24 out of the last 33 months.

For the “Straight Arrows,” they will drive on and stay vigilant, adhering to the old Army motto “stay alert and stay alive.” Camp Taji tenants can rest assured the “Straight Arrows” stand ready 24/7 to protect them while they sleep.

HHD NCO re-ups for big bucks



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Glasgow, middle, a fire effects NCO, HHD, 1st BCT, is reenlisted by Maj. Buddy Frick on Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 18. Glasgow received \$22,000 as a tax-free bonus.

4th Support Bn. unveils colors



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt

Lt. Col. Michael Snow, right, commander of the 4th Spt. Bn. and Command Sgt. Maj. Ronny Martinez unveil the battalion colors at their TOA ceremony, Jan. 13.

7-10 CAV officially assumes AOR

By Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt
Editor, Raider Review

The 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment unveiled its colors and officially took control of their area of responsibility at a Transition of Authority ceremony held on Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 15.

The battalion is now set to take over the mission from 2nd Battalion, 70th Armored Regiment who owned the space for the last year.

"Thirteen months ago, 7-10 Cav. was just a concept on paper," said Lt. Col. Dave Thompson. "Today the troopers of 7-10 Cav. stand ready to do their duty in the War on Terror.

"Like much of the past year, today's ceremony marks a change," Thompson added. "Today, 7-10 finally takes over the battlespace of



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt

Lt. Col. Dave Thompson, left, commander of 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment and Command Sgt. Maj. Willie Keeler, unveil their battalion colors at a TOA ceremony held on Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 15.

2-70 Armor. "I am thankful and proud to be in command of such fine Soldiers. You show incredible

flexibility, endurance and professionalism. We have a job to do, so let's get on with it."

M14 brought back to combat terrorism

continued from page 3 —

M16A1 and today's M16A2 and M4 fires.

"The 5.56 will zip right through you, and if it doesn't fragment, you would be able to live another day," Brumlow said. "But if somebody hits you dead in the chest with a 7.62 mm round, you can call it a day."

The unit also has been outfitted with two other sniper rifles, which has been in the Army arsenal for years, to help keep

terrorists at bay during the brigade's deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"My sniper section also has [the] M24 Remington 700, which uses a 7.62 mm round and has a high powered scope," said Brumlow. "We also have the .50 caliber sniper rifle, which is used on hard targets, such as cars.

"I think it is a good thing they brought out the M14 out of hibernation," Brumlow added. "With the right training, right

equipment and right resources, I think 1st Brigade could eliminate insurgents at a greater number."

Placing this weapon in the hands of today's troopers enables U.S. forces to better help the Iraqi security forces protect the Iraqi people and provide a safe and secure environment for their democratic government.

Most of the enemy snipers encountered are terrorists who carry the Russian-made Dragunov

SVD bolt-action rifle.

With the M14 outfitted with optics, Raider Soldiers can outshoot the threat posed to the unit and the Iraqi people.

The M14 is "an old, tried and true, battle-tested weapon," said Lt. Col. Kevin Dixon, the brigade deputy commander. "We are the best trained and equipped army in the world."

The Raider Brigade is postured and ready to conduct any mission given, including sniper missions.

Detainee training vital to Special Troops Battalion war mission

By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff writer

While the 1st Brigade Combat Team made final preparations for its move north into Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Soldiers from two companies in the Special Troops Battalion, 1st BCT, 4th Infantry Division participated in detainee operations and military operations in an urban terrain (MOUT) training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 27.

"We are doing MOUT training with detainee operations in preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom," said Staff Sgt. Orlando Ochoa, squad leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Company. "We are doing it just in case we have to take detainees, so we can do it properly."

The training is structured, which includes crawl, walk and run phases. In the crawl phase, Soldiers practice how to stack an entry team and the steps involved in moving a team in and out of buildings.

The walk phase speeds up all the techniques



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Soldiers from the STB, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. pull 360 degree perimeter security as they detain two suspects at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

learned and continues until the instructors feel the team can do all of the techniques seamlessly and without hesitation.

(Defense Language Institute)," said Spc. Sammy Muller, a linguist with Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment.

"The training here is important, because it allows Soldiers a chance to do some hands-on training with detainees on the battlefield."

The run phase places Soldiers at the MOUT site in a mock house raid where they maintain 360 degree security, clear a building, engage insurgents and encounter Iraqi civilians role-played by members of their battalion.

"The Army has chosen to hire native speakers and make them Soldiers, because it is faster than sending a person to DLI

"We are role-playing Iraqi civilians walking through a town with AK-47s, when we come across American Soldiers doing house raids looking for an IED (improvised explosive device) making factory."

In a scenario the Iraqi civilians are stopped, questioned, arrested and searched. A female role-plays an Iraqi man's wife to see how an all-male squad

will detain and search her without offending her husband.

"One of the problems we have is some don't know if males can search females," Ochoa said. "There some confusion, so we try to take care of it with this training. We have a female, who dresses up as an Iraqi civilian, and we make sure she's only searched by females."

Another aspect of the training is Soldiers learn to differentiate how the climate in Iraq has changed since OIF began. During the first rotation, Soldiers could detain anyone whom they deemed dangerous to the U.S. war effort.

Today, Iraqi forces are in the lead detaining criminal suspects, while U.S. Soldiers find themselves in a peacekeeping role allowing Iraqis to conduct security operations.

"The training here is important, because it allows Soldiers a chance to do some hands-on-training with detainees on the battlefield," said Capt. Clyde Ball, the brigade provost marshal. "Also, it lets them use the rules of engagement and escalation of force rules, which better prepares Soldiers."

Sands of Kuwait offer Soldiers chance to hone MOUT skills

By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff writer

As the sands of the Kuwaiti desert change with each and every gust of wind, Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team are ready to change the sands of time in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

One such company, in the 1st BCT, dedicated to changing the sands of time in the Middle East is Company B, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, who are conducted military operations in an urban terrain (MOUT) at Camp Beuhring in Kuwait.

MOUT training gives Soldiers the unique opportunity to practice rooting out terrorists in a mock village, while testing their ability to take care of innocent locals. Soldiers rehearse clearing buildings as well as reviewing tactical mistakes recorded through



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Pfc. Collins Mason, Co. B, 1st Bn., 66th AR, 1st BCT conducts Military Operations in an Urban Terrain (MOUT) training at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait.

video cameras inside and outside of the buildings.

"I think the training is valuable, especially with the video camera, because the cameras don't lie," said 2nd Lt. Elliott Burns, a platoon leader with the company. "It lets you go

back through (the training) and do an after action review. Then we can pick out any last minute changes and techniques that need to be made."

One change the company found, with the aid of the video camera, is _____ (go to MOUT, page 11)

Staying in shape in the desert is a must

By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff Writer

Running and gunning through insurgent filled streets and buildings, dodging rocket propelled grenades and engaging the enemy in hand-to-hand combat requires a grandiose amount of courage, mental discipline and a consistent

level of physical fitness.

For Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, being deployed in a combat zone, mixed with plenty of guard duty and just being a Soldier 24/7, can become obstacles in a Soldier's physical fitness training program.

Leaders have found the need to improvise the standard five-days-a-week

at 6:30 to 7:30 a.m.

schedule and place the responsibility of remaining physically fit on section leaders and each individual Soldier.

"We do PT as a section, because it brings us closer as a team," said Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Glasgow, a fires effects non-commissioned officer with the Raider Brigade's Headquarters and

Headquarters Detachment.

The cohesion and teamwork pretty much make us a family. You don't want to leave your family out there (on the battlefield), because we want to stay together as a group."

Another reason some sections of HHD perform PT as a group is because of the gut-busting selection of —(go to exercise, page 11)

Brigade's support battalion struts' its stuff at convoy live fire

By Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt
Editor, *Raider Review*

While most of the nation prepared for a jolly old man cloaked in red jumping down their chimney, Soldiers from the 4th Support Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division jumped into a convoy live fire exercise on Christmas Eve as they ready themselves to deploy north in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The exercise gave Soldiers of the battalion a chance to strengthen their skills at recognizing and reacting to improvised explosive devices, conducting security operations while convoying and firing at targets while moving through a village.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent A. Hunt

A .50 caliber machine gunner with 4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. engages a target at the convoy live fire exercise on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 24.

"This type of exercise puts them [Soldiers] in the environment of IED's," said Lt. Col. Michael Snow, commander of the 4th Spt. Bn. "This is something we really needed, because it builds confidence and we don't get to practice this very often.

"This is a lot to adapt to, because you're engaging

targets while you are moving in a convoy," Snow added. "Any live fire exercise, which builds confidence, will help save lives and make Soldiers more survivable."

Earlier in December 2005, the brigade started moving from Fort Hood, Texas, to the Middle East for a year-long deployment

where they will be part of a coalition effort to help the Iraqis rebuild a country ravished by decades of a dictatorship type government.

Soldiers of the 1st BCT stayed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, for more than three-weeks building combat power, practicing shooting their weapons, getting mentally prepared and making final preparations to move north and do their part in support of OIF.

The top item of the brigade's agenda is training the Iraqi army to defend a country peppered with terrorist cells aimed at disrupting the developing democratic government."

NCOs [non-commissioned officers] are the ones leading this and —(go to convoy, page 12)

Mass reenlistment retains quality Soldiers

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were not that big," Nicolai added.

After completing the oath of service, Col. Pasquarette instructed the entire formation to close around him, so that he could address the troops. He mentioned a few keys of success to the Raiders. After his remarks, the brigade sang the 4th Inf. Div. song, the commander dismissed

the troops and the battalions marched away to eat their evening meal.

"Since we have been here we have reenlisted 99 Soldiers," Nicolai continued.

"We're on track right now with our reenlistment goals," said Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Wells, the brigade's command sergeant major. "We're between 25 – 30 percent."

Currently, the brigade is building combat power, making final equipment preparations and getting mentally prepared to deploy north into Iraq.

"The Raider Brigade is ready to deploy to support the Iraqi Army as the Iraqis learn to provide a stable and secure environment for their new democratic government," said Maj. David Olson, the brigade spokesman.

MOUT training sharpens urban skills

continued from page 9 —

not stacking personnel outside of a building for too long. The goal is to get inside as quickly as possible, so Soldiers do not become vulnerable to sniper attacks from nearby buildings.

“Right now what we are trying to do is establish basic fundamentals when clearing rooms and also what to look for when trying to find IED’s (Improvised Explosive Devices),” said Sgt. David Fitzgerald a company squad leader. “My main role, as a squad leader, is to teach my Soldiers everything they need to survive and make sure that they come back alive.

“I think the biggest thing we’re having trouble with is trying to get these young guys’ heads in the game,” Fitzgerald added. “They are



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Soldiers with Co. B, 1st Bn., 66th AR, 1st BCT conduct Military Operations in an Urban Terrain (MOUT) training at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait. The brigade is deployed to the Middle East in support of the 4th Inf. Div.’s deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

here, but they don’t understand the gravity of the situation. They don’t understand that it’s life or death. They still treat it like it’s a game.”

The 1st BCT was in Kuwait building combat power and preparing themselves mentally to move north in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Even though this time around the mission has changed from fighting a conventional war to training the Iraqis to take care of themselves, some find they will be conducting the same operations they performed when they were in Iraq three years ago.

The difference will be who they are standing next

to when they root out terrorists. Instead of only standing next to U.S. Soldiers, Soldiers will find themselves working hand-in-hand with the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police force.

“The hardest thing in the training, I think, is having one set of standards for what we are doing,” said Pfc. Adam Davis. “Each NCO has their own way of clearing a room or some technique they use to accomplish something in the mission that they used to do in their old unit.

Sometimes it gets confusing when you have different NCOs telling you to do different things.

“This is what training is about, though,” Davis added. “It is about making mistakes and learning from them, that way when we do it for real we won’t make any mistakes.”

Exercise: Important part of deploying

continued from page 9 —

choices the dining facility has to offer here. Leaders can also personally keep tabs on each and every one of their Soldier’s physical fitness needs.

“I think it is harder for Soldiers to do PT on their own,” Glasgow added. “No matter where you go they (the DFAC and fast-food vendors) are offering a wide-variety of food. Soldiers tend to eat then come back here (to the sleep tent) and sleep. After that they lose motivation to go

back to work or get some exercise.”

Although some Soldiers feel section PT is adequate to maintain their level of physical fitness, some Soldiers feel they get a better workout on their own. They like to customize their workouts to improve their physical fitness level and exceed Army standards.

“I like doing PT on my own,” said Pvt. Robert Doss, Company B, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery. “I believe the Army likes to overwork

some muscles and there are only a few muscles that you can workout everyday.

“I know how far I can go,” Doss added. “I work at my own pace and it is better that way, because I don’t have to worry about leaving anyone behind.”

Despite each Soldier having their own preferences on how to keep themselves in shape, everyone understands physical conditioning is vital to performance on the battlefield.

Projects improve quality of local Iraqi life

continued from page 1 —————
for the Adya Village School giving the teachers and students more working space. Construction workers refurbished several other classroom buildings and added toilet and hand washing buildings. The project began September 2005 costing \$136,000 and is scheduled for completion April 2006.

The school provides children with an education in a clean, safe and secure environment and impacts 5,000 local families. The school employs 15 Iraqi staff members and serves the outlying area as well as

Assariya.

The biggest project in the village is the Assariya Women's Center, which started October 2005 and is scheduled for completion May 2006. This center promotes women's rights, a unified Iraq and teaches them basic computer and homemaking skills. This project costs over \$160,000 and impacts about 2,000 local women.

Once the center is completed, \$40,000 will be spent on computers, sewing machines, furniture and other items.

The most expensive project is the sewage

system, which costs \$1.4 million. The project started September 2005 and is scheduled for completion March 2006.

Phase I of the sewer project is laying the main sewer lines to the collection reservoir and is scheduled for completion Jan. 30. Phase II of the sewer project is connecting the sewer pipes from the village houses to the main sewer lines, which is scheduled for completion in March.

The citizens are anxiously waiting for these projects to be completed.

"I feel that the sewage project will be most

beneficial to my family," said Rahman Rohammed, a councilman on the Al-Hamamiat Nahia, the local governing body. "For future projects, I would like to see a soccer field for the kids and a medical clinic for the local residents." Rohammed is a retired surgeon, who served in the Republican Guards.

Everyday the Coalition, working with the local councils, work to improve the quality of life for the Iraqi people, but there is still more work to do. These projects take time before they are completed and new projects begin.

Convoy live fire teaches Soldiers to run and gun

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that helps build confidence in the troops," Snow said. "Not only have we gotten better with our weapons, but we've got some good leadership experience."

Exercises, such as this convoy live fire exercise, strengthen the battalion's ability to conduct movement operations in a combat environment, familiarize Soldiers with a worst case scenario and teach them

exactly what to do when an emergency happens.

"It gave everyone a chance to see how they would react under pressure," said Sgt. Erin Gibson, truck commander with the battalion's personal security detachment. "This is our job, being part of the PSD, and it gave us practice for what we will be doing when we get into Iraq."

Even though the training was hard work and took a lot of hours, some

Soldiers, who have never been deployed before, felt it was well worth it.

"It was hard, but it was well worth the long hours we went through," said Spc. Adam Velasquez, a .50 caliber machine gunner also with the battalion's PSD. "For us, who have never been to a war, it really taught us what reality will be like. I'm 100 percent better at my job, since we hit ground here."

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